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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1107
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RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0352
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0365
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 0264
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0203
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0553
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0541
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 BANGUI 000273

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C
USUN FOR DMUERS
PARIS FOR RKANEDA
LONDON FOR PLORD
NAIROBI FOR AKARAS
AFRICOM FOR JKUGEL
INR FOR JPEKKINEN
DRL FOR SCRAMPTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREF](#) [KPKO](#) [CT](#)
SUBJECT: CPJP MOTIVATIONS FOR ATTACK ON NDELE

REF: A. A - 09 BANGUI 155 AND PREVIOUS
[1](#)B. REF: B - 09 BANGUI 46
[1](#)C. REF: C - 09 BANGUI 45

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[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The November 26 attack by the Patriotic Convention for Justice and Peace (CPJP) on Ndele in the northern Central African Republic (CAR) reignited a conflict largely dormant since the start of the rainy season (Ref A). The counter attack by the Central African Army (FACA) on December 8 ended with the FACA claiming to have pursued the CPJP over the Chadian border from their strongholds along the Ndele/Garba road. The FACA have since returned to Ndele. Post suspects that the two sides are trying to establish positions from which to negotiate from strength -- with the CPJP's leadership looking for greater control over the economy of the region and the FACA attempting to prove to the CPJP and other rebel groups that it is not an impotent force. END SUMMARY.

Details of Ndele attack still unclear

[1](#)2. (SBU) In the early morning of November 26, the CPJP, a rebel group based in northeastern CAR and comprised primarily of Rounga tribesmen, launched a surprise attack on the provincial capital Ndele, targeting government installations like the headquarters of the Presidential Guard, the gendarmerie, and the Prefet's house. The CPJP hit targets with rocket propelled grenades and light arms, occupied and looted the government buildings, and left at noon when the FACA began its counter attack. There are reports of looting in the town - it is confirmed that the CPJP absconded with the Prefet's vehicle - but it is unclear if the looting was the work of the CPJP or that of the local population taking advantage of the chaos.

Nevertheless, within the day, the FACA - who melted away during the attack - regrouped and counter attacked, regaining control of the town by the afternoon. Multiple reports from contacts in Ndele mention wounded CPJP fighters summarily executed by the FACA, with one specific report of a CPJP officer - and allegedly a former wildlife park ranger - being shot after brief questioning. There have been various exaggerated estimates of killed and wounded on both sides, but we have yet to receive a casualty estimate from an impartial observer.

13. (SBU) Ndele is a town made up mostly of mud buildings with thatched roofs, and a number of buildings and houses burned as a result of the fighting. While neither side seems to have purposefully set fire to residences, one very important residence did suffer damage - that of the Sultan of Ndele. The Sultan is a man of great influence in the region and an informal interlocutor between the government and the CPJP (Ref B). Contacts at the UN suspect his residence, though close to the FACA base and possibly the victim of stray fire, was likely targeted by FACA mortar fire. Many in the government question the Sultan's allegiances and the mortar blast could be interpreted as a message to the local leader.

Who are the CPJP?

14. (SBU) The CPJP is remarkably well organized, equipped, and run relative to other ragtag rebel groups in the CAR. One observer who traveled through the CPJP's stronghold of Akoursoubak the week before the attack saw a formal ceremony where promotions were bestowed upon a select group of officers. The observer also noticed recognizable military police manning check points, distinctly separate from the regular militiamen. The uniforms of the CPJP are reported to be new and originating from the Chadian National Army (ANT) - the person saw the black

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stitching spelling out ``A.N.T'' bleeding through a white cloth that covered up the patch. (We have heard other reports noting the quality of CPJP equipment. Another observer said, ``I thought at first that they were ANT''). A different source, who frequents the area, remarked that the CPJP does not extort taxes from the local population, a practice common among the other militia groups in the CAR.

15. Days after the attack, the CPJP announced an accord with Abdulaye Miskine's Democratic Front of the Central African People (FDPC) (Ref C). The FDPC is a signatory to the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program (DDR), but recently pulled out claiming anger over the slow roll out of the process. The FDPC is small, but very well armed (NOTE: There is unconfirmed speculation that the Libyan government finances the FDPC. They are also the only Central African militia with a website: [HYPERLINK "http://www.centrafriquefdpc.com"](http://www.centrafriquefdpc.com) www.centrafriquefdpc.com . END NOTE). The practical implications of this alliance are unclear as the FDPC's area of operation is some 220 km from the CPJP's, and their aims vis-à-vis the government are very different.

16. (SBU) The day after the attack on Ndele, the CPJP released an updated organizational chart (NOTE: These names are possibly pseudonyms as combatants from this area often take on symbolic names. END NOTE) :

-- Dhafane Mohamed Moussa - Secretary General and Official
Negotiator, in charge External Relationships.
-- Colonel Richard Deye - Chief of Staff
-- Colonel Issa Adam - Troop Commander

The shadowy Karama Souleymane Nestor remains President of the Supreme Council of the Movement, but rumors suggest that Nestor, who may not be a Rounga, is only a figurehead for the real power figures of the CPJP. Interestingly, Charles Massi-- the four time former Central African Minister, former member of the Central African National Assembly and proclaimed President of

the CPJP earlier in the year - was conspicuously left off the announcement. This is likely as a result of the failure of Massi to bring the CARG to the negotiating table. More importantly, this release likely signifies that the CPJP, with the announcement of an ``Official Negotiator'' days after the attack, are gesturing to the government that they seek a settlement.

17. (SBU) Many in the Rounga community, both in Ndele and in Bangui, purport to be perplexed by the CPJP. While they admit that some of their youth have joined the CPJP, they hold fast that the leadership is ``foreign'' - a term of ambiguous definition.

COMMENT: Diamonds Motivate the CPJP

18. (SBU) The CARG does not have the strength to effectively quash the CPJP. The CPJP has made no public calls to join the DDR process, and when asked claim their goal is ``justice and peace for all Central Africans''. The true motivation behind the CPJP's rebellion likely lies with the diamond mines near Ndele:

-- After violence in 2007 in the Vakaga, Post believes that the CARG subcontracted responsibility for the region to the increasingly Goula dominated UFDR led by Zakaria Damane in return for payments back to Bangui.

-- The UFDR was previously multiethnic, but started to fragment once the conflict with the CARG subsided. Damane, a Goula,

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maintained his support within the UFDR by increasingly relying on his ethnicity against all others. The Rounga in particular suffered and were pushed off their traditional diamond fields in eastern CAR and specifically those at Sam Ouandja and Bria.

-- It was this event that sparked the creation of the CPJP. It is thought that the CPJP is a combination of former Rounga UFDR fighters and potentially former Presidential Guard members who helped President Bozize to power in 2003 but who then found themselves alienated from Bangui. They coalesced around the Rounga who now run the diamond mines around Ndele and may be seeking to obtain a deal similar to the one that Damane attained from Bozize: control over the diamonds and trade in the region in return for payments back to Bozize.

19. (SBU) The area north of Ndele is geographically and politically remote from Bangui, making confirmation of facts and figures difficult, but the attack on Ndele was clearly bruising to the CARG's ego with various ministers emotionally blaming international NGOs in the area with aiding and abetting the militia and threatening to revoke their right to work in the region. The question thus remains: was the embarrassment felt by the government ameliorated enough by the counterattack that they can begin a dialogue? Bangui has yet to show it has an interest in a deal, but the CPJP may have exhibited just enough muscle in this important time before national elections in April 2010 to get the government's attention. END COMMENT.

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